

JAPANESE MAGAZINES

The January issues of the leading Japanese magazines naturally have a good deal to say about the "War of Greater East Asia." However, as they were printed in December, they could cover only the first stages of this war. More interesting perhaps than the reports on the actual fighting is an article by Ashihei Hino, an author whose works are discussed in this issue, both in the article by Tsutomu Narasaki and in our Book Review.

Silent Resolution

He has published a short essay in *Kaizo* entitled "Silent Resolution." It is almost lost among the learned articles on "War and Navigation," "War and Labor Mobilization," "War and International Law," "America's War Guilt," etc., all written by more or less famous scholars and statesmen. But Hino's article is worth reading. There is nothing artificial about it; it goes straight to the heart and tells one, better than any statesman could, what the Japanese people really felt when the radio announced that Japan had declared war on America and England.

The night following the outbreak of war there happened to be a session of the neighborhood league (*tonarigumi*) at Hino's home. As they sat there behind black curtains in the dim lights of an air-raid bulb, there was just the usual talk about sugar and candy rations, household economies and air-raid practices. Obviously the outbreak of war had not come as a great shock to the people. There was only a certain tension in their faces: nothing more. What was bound to happen one day had happened. This was the feeling that penetrated everybody. "The passionate love for our country did not express itself in vain excitement, but in a quiet silent appearance, and this was proof of the people's strength."

The author only gives expression to what everybody in Japan felt in those first days of war when he says: "We trust our army and our government, we believe in our glorious history and in the greatness of our country of which we are but one small part. Out of this quiet confidence springs the readiness to die for our country. One hundred million people are now brothers-in-arms!"—L.

Hongkong

Characteristic of vivid war reporting is an article by M. Watanabe in the first number of *Jikyoku Zasshi*. (This is a new magazine issued by the Kaizosha, the publishing company which, apart from *Kaizo*, formerly printed two monthlies, *Kaizo-Special* and *Tairiku*. These two magazines have now been combined into the new *Jikyoku Zasshi*.) Mr. Watanabe gives a lively account of the battle and fall of Hongkong which he witnessed as a reporter. The first day of the war the airfield was set on fire. Thereafter not a

single British plane rose to meet the Japanese "wild eagles." In order to spare the civilian population, the Japanese forces, firmly entrenched in Kowloon, sent over an officer with a request for surrender. The British commander refused, stating that he had water, food, and ammunition for three months and was therefore under obligation to hold out at least a month. In reply to the refusal, the Japanese forces resolved to subject Hongkong to heavy fire for several days. But the civilian districts were spared. Thereupon another request for surrender was forwarded which again met with refusal. Then two landing parties were sent over to prepare the way for the occupation of the entire northern coast of the island. All resistance was overcome till only the central fortifications on top of Victoria Peak were in action. Here over ten thousand men held out in the face of hopeless odds, and the writer frankly admits his admiration for so tenacious a foe. He feels that those embattled defenders, knowing full well that their surrender or destruction was only a question of time, fought solely in order to uphold the traditions of their Empire.

Journalists in Council

Soho Tokutomi's style is regarded as the *non plus ultra* of modern Japanese political and historical prose. His book *Showa Tokuhon*, an account and valuation of the last period of Japanese history, is full of moral admonitions, apt quotations, and witticisms, and was a best-seller at all newsstands. Mr. Tokutomi is a "guest author" of the *Nichi-Nichi* concern with the prerogative of writing whenever he pleases. In *Jikyoku Joho* an interview is published which he has accorded to some of his colleagues. After dwelling at length on his extensive travels in Europe and Russia, he states: "Germany's plans for a co-prosperity sphere embracing Europe, Africa, etc. are indeed vast. I am sure Germany and Japan will shake hands in the Indian Ocean." To the question, "What do you think will be the future of England?" he replies: "I think she will survive as part of the USA." On the subject of China he says: "I have always maintained that China cannot be assimilated by Japan. China must be ruled by the Chinese themselves. We cannot go there in order to rule, but we have to occupy important frontier- and coastal districts."

The same magazine contains a round-table-conference of journalists, among them the military writer Yahei Oba. The final conclusion amounts to: "The great Anglo-American naval losses caused by the action of the Japanese Navy will greatly influence other theaters of war: the German and Italian fleets which were so far bottled up in the North Sea and the Mediterranean by superior

British forces will again become active. . . . Since Germany has given up the idea of seizing Moscow she is in a position to speed up the North African war and to advance towards Suez."

Bombs Over Moscow

Much attention is again devoted to the German-Soviet war, and a number of outstanding articles deal with this subject. K. Maeda in *Jikyoku Zasshi* tells the story of Moscow as he saw it. The chief features of this unfortunate city are snow and hunger. The bombing of Moscow by German aircraft commenced on July 21, a month after the outbreak of the war, at 10 p.m. The first three nights were the worst. Military objectives around Moscow were the principal targets. Nevertheless many streets of wooden houses burnt down inside the city. Fortunately for the population the new subway afforded shelter during the night. In September the German bombers were needed over Leningrad and the Ukraine, so that Moscow was spared; but near the end of September trouble started again. All in all the damage as observed by the author was quite considerable. On leaving the Soviet Union he was impressed by the great number of Russian officers and men who, in spite of the war raging in the western parts of the Union, were being sent to Mongolia. He was also struck by the appalling poverty rampant in Siberia.

Fuse On Stalin

Russia-wise Katsuji Fuse is in his element when writing on Stalin in *Jikyoku Joho*. He starts by apportioning responsibility: World War II was started because Stalin and Roosevelt wanted to make use of the European war for their own purposes, and the Russo-German war broke out because Stalin seized the Baltic countries and Bessarabia. "It is a certainty that Stalin rejoiced when the Japanese-American war broke out, because he knew that, while busy elsewhere, Japan would not menace Russia in the Far East. If Russia loses the protection of the Don-Volga line she will be in the position of China when that country lost the Wuhan area and had to withdraw as far as Chungking. In the way of help, Russia has nothing to expect from England and the USA. Which is more probable—that the Soviet Union will remain neutral towards Japan, or that she will wait for an opportunity to descend on us when she sees fit? The Soviet Union has always been hostile towards Japan, but at present she is too occupied with her German war to become bothersome over here. It would be very typical of Stalin, if, before striking, he remained outwardly neutral, while not omitting to commit anti-Japanese acts behind our backs all the time."

In this connection the *Revue Diplomatique* (*Gaiko Jiho*) draws attention to the incessant Russian violations of the frontiers of Manchukuo and Mongolia. These incursions clearly aim at military reconnaissance and require strict watchfulness on the part of Japan on account of the winter-stalemate on the Russo-

German front and Russia's general attitude towards the Japanese-American war.

What Will Germany Do?

T. Nagano comments in *Jikyoku Joho* on the new developments in Russia: "Are we to believe the rumors of a German-Russian armistice? Such talk is without foundation according to *Pravda*, which states: 'As long as there is any Russian territory left unoccupied, peace will not be discussed'. . . . Furthermore Hitler, while admitting that a temporary handicap has been imposed by Winter, has announced renewed attacks in the spring. One of the reasons for the German attack on Russia was Germany's intention of preparing the attack on England. Supposing that Russia is no longer able to hamper Germany's strategy against England and the USA, it is conceivable that Germany will now commence new actions. The occupation of Leningrad and Moscow would have been a serious blow to the Red Army. But of greater importance is the fact that Germany cannot succeed in her planned attack on England and the Near East if she cannot obtain sufficient foodstuffs and oil. Even if, therefore, the siege of both the Red citadels should be abandoned, renewed German efforts are to be expected on the southern front sooner or later. . . . The long-expected Near-Eastern expedition has in fact been so long delayed by the German-Russian war that England has had time to entrench herself in Syria, Iraq, Persia, and Afghanistan, so that she now firmly holds the approaches to her Indian Empire."

It Can Be Done

Also in *Jikyoku Joho*, S. Itagura ponders on the question whether the German Army in Russia will, after declaring a temporary suspension of active hostilities, suffer the same fate as Napoleon's *vieux grognards* on horseback. According to the author the answer to this is no, because of the obvious differences in transportation, supply, etc. between then and now. Furthermore Napoleon was not defeated by Winter alone, but largely by his own mistakes. Napoleon planned to set up a brilliant court at Moscow while awaiting Alexander's surrender. This was a political error. Germany likewise has had to cease her attack and to provide for winter quarters in Russia. But there is no reason to believe that Hitler will withdraw to Poland as Napoleon did. Instead Hitler will doubtless attack in the south. As early as October it became obvious that the German Army was being much impeded by bad weather, especially mud, cold, rains, and snowstorms. It is certainly true that Europeans have a tendency to make two big mistakes about Russia: they are unable to imagine the magnitude of her space, and they underrate the severity of the Russian winter. Russia is easily able to absorb invading armies, but this fact is not of an absolute nature. This has been borne out by the domination exercised in that country by Lithuanians, Mongols, and others.—P.